

PREVENTION

IDAHO CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND NEWSLETTER

Adult Health Problems, Dysfunctional Behavior Linked to Traumatic Childhood Experiences

Vincent Felitti, M.D., Co-Principal Investigator of the study, will keynote the ICTF Annual Conference on Friday, April 15 at 8:30am.

Many common medical problems and dysfunctional behaviors in adults are the result of adverse emotional or physical experiences in childhood, according to a major medical study.

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program in San Diego, matches the health status and health risk behaviors of adults against specific categories of abuse and household dysfunction during their childhood. Three categories pertained to personal abuse: recurrent physical abuse, recurrent emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. Four categories pertained to growing up in a dysfunctional household--i.e., with an alcoholic person or a drug user; where someone was in prison; where someone was chronically depressed, mentally ill, or suicidal; where the mother was treated violently; and where the parents were separated, divorced, or in some way lost to the patient during childhood.

The study results show a strong relationship between the number of adverse childhood experiences and many of our most common public health problems including: cigarette smoking, cardiovascular disease, cancers, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, alcohol and other substance abuse, early first intercourse, teen pregnancy and paternity, unintended pregnancy, promiscuity and sexually transmitted disease, depression and suicide attempts, obesity and diabetes, physical inactivity, and high rates of health care utilization. The study shows these adverse childhood experiences underlie many chronic medical problems in adults.

The ACE Study has provided evidence to strongly suggest the following:

- Many chronic diseases in adults are determined decades earlier, in childhood.
- The determinants are often adverse emotional experiences.
- These experiences lead to the use of effective, but ultimately damaging, de-stressing devices such as smoking, over-eating, alcoholism, street drug use, or promiscuity.
- These coping devices, which are long term risk factors, conventionally are viewed as public health 'problems' when they also are actually personal solutions to unrecognized stresses that have been internalized.
- It is this 'solution' aspect that makes risk factor modification so difficult.
- ACEs are properly viewed as the most basic causes of death for many adults.
- ACEs are so common that they should be identified by routine screening of all medical patients and not by selective screening.

The results of the ACE Study have led Kaiser Permanente to commit \$1.8 million to family-based interventions in three cities. The "Healthy Steps" intervention begins with the birth of a child at a Kaiser hospital and includes trained, family-based intervention teams working to support the health and well-being of the child and its family during the first three years of life.

William H. Foege, former Director of the CDC, writes from the public health standpoint: "In one of the most significant studies since C. Henry Kempe surprised the medical world with descriptions of the Battered Child Syndrome, the authors begin a process of describing some indicators of childhood abuse and a resulting Battered Adult Syndrome."

Dr. Vincent Felitti, Co-principal Investigator for the ACE study will be a keynote speaker at the Idaho Children's Trust Fund conference on April 15th and 16th in Boise. Dr. Felitti's talk "Turning Gold Into Lead: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study" will take place on Friday morning followed by a 1 1/2 hour workshop covering the study and responses to it in more detail. For more information on the Idaho Children's Trust Fund Conference please go to our website at <http://idahochildrenstrustfund.state.id.us>.



CHILD ABUSE

CAN BE PREVENTED

Just fill in the voluntary donation line on your Idaho State Income Tax Form. Your tax deductible contribution stays in Idaho to keep Idaho children safe from abuse and neglect.



Check Child Abuse

<http://idahochildrenstrustfund.state.id.us>

Protecting Idaho children from abuse and neglect.

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Idaho Recognizes April as Child Abuse Prevention Month

Idaho joins with states across the nation to recognize April as the designated month to call attention to the issue of child abuse and neglect and the ways in which we can all help to prevent the devastating consequences of abuse.

What You Can Do To Help Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

We all have a role to play in building strong communities in which families and children are valued and supported. It is in these kinds of communities that children are safest from abuse and neglect. Here are some things you can do as a concerned individual.

The Five R's

Prevent Child Abuse America has developed the following "Five R's," which can help individuals better understand the role they can play in child abuse prevention.

Raise the issue.

- Call or write your candidates and elected officials to educate them about issues in your community and the need for child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment programs.
- Contact your local school district and faith community to encourage them to sponsor classes and support programs for new parents.

Reach out to kids and parents in your community.

- Anything you do to support kids and parents in your family and extended community helps to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.
- Be a good neighbor. Offer to baby-sit. Donate your children's used clothing, furniture, and toys for use by another family. Be kind and supportive, particularly to new parents and children.

Remember the risk factors.

- Child abuse and neglect occur in all segments of our society, but the risk factors are greater in families where parents:
 - Abuse alcohol or drugs
 - Are isolated from their families or communities
 - Have difficulty controlling their anger or stress
 - Appear uninterested in the care, nourishment, or safety of their children
 - Seem to be having serious economic, housing, or personal problems

Recognize the warning signs.

- Some of the warning signs that a child might be abused or neglected include:
 - Nervousness around adults
 - Aggression toward adults or other children
 - Inability to stay awake or to concentrate for extended periods
 - Sudden, dramatic changes in personality or activities
 - Acting out sexually or showing interest in sex that is not appropriate for his or her age
 - Frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries
 - Low self-esteem
 - Poor hygiene

Report suspected abuse or neglect.

- If you suspect abuse or neglect is occurring, report it—and keep reporting it—until something is done. Contact child protective services (in your local phone book) or your local police department, Call 211 Idaho CareLine to report suspected child abuse or neglect in Idaho.

From the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information at: <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov>.

Tips for Being a Nurturing Parent



One of the most important things you can do to prevent child abuse is to build a positive relationship with your own children.

Help your children feel loved and secure.

We can all take steps to improve our relationship with our children:

- Make sure your children know you love them, even when they do something wrong.
- Encourage your children. Praise their achievements and talents.
- Spend time with your children. Do things together that you all enjoy.

Seek help if you need it.

Problems such as un-employment or a child with special needs can add to family tension. And parenting is a challenging job on its own. No one expects you to know how to do it all. If you think stress may be affecting the way you treat your child, or if you just want the extra support that all parents need at some point, try the following:

- Talk to someone. Tell a friend, healthcare provider, or a leader in your faith community about your concerns. Or join a self-help group for parents. (See Circle of Parents™ and Parents Anonymous® Inc. at <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/topics/prevention/resources/reslist.cfm?svcID=134>.)

- Get counseling. Individual or family counseling can help you learn healthy ways to communicate with each other.
- Take a parenting class. Nobody was born knowing how to be a good parent. Parenting classes can give you the skills you need to raise a happy, healthy child.
- Accept help. You don't have to do it all. Accept offers of help from friends, family, or neighbors. And don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

Address marital tension.

Children do best when they are raised by parents in a stable and healthy marriage. Research has found successful couples do not have fewer differences or less to fight about, but they are able to effectively handle their differences or disagreements. If you are experiencing tension in your marriage, seek out the supports you need to help you resolve it.

From the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information at: <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov>.

5th Annual Conference April 15 & 16

There is still time to sign up for the Idaho Children's Trust Fund's 5th Annual Conference, Strengthening Families to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect. It will be held in Boise on Thursday, April 15th and Friday, April 16th. This year's conference showcases information that will assist us all in protecting children from abuse and neglect. Beginning with understanding the impact of domestic violence on children to being aware of children's different temperaments, to learning about the techniques that sexual predators use to groom victims, their families and communities, our speakers will empower you to protect children. As adults, it is our responsibility to create an environment in which children can grow, learn and develop in relative safety.

Whether you are a parent, prevention program staff, social worker, educator, health provider, child protection worker, victim advocate, member of a faith community, business leader, or a caring citizen, you are invited to attend and learn the ways in which every one of us can help keep children safe.

Our keynote speakers are nationally recognized experts who care deeply about children. Child abuse not only affects the child who is abused; there are implications for our children, their children, and our world when children are abused and neglected. Join us as we learn ways to make our world a better place by preventing child abuse and neglect.

For more information on the conference visit the Idaho Children's Trust Fund website at: <http://idahochildrenstrustfund.state.id.us>, or call 208-386-9317.





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Calendar of Events

April Child Abuse Prevention Month

April 15

Tax forms due. Check Child

Abuse by donating on your

Idaho tax return!

April 15-16

ICTF Strengthening Families to

Prevent Child Abuse and

Neglect Conference in Boise.

For more information go to

<http://idahochildrenstrustfund.state.id.us>

April 30

El Dia de los Ninos (The Day of

the Child) Celebration

May 17-18 ICTF Quarterly Board Meeting

Late May 2004 – 2005 ICTF

Grant recipients announced

Idaho Children's Trust Fund
Updates our Motto

CHECK CHILD ABUSE is the new motto for ICTF. CHECK CHILD ABUSE refers to the ICTF belief that by all working together we can go a long ways to checking or stopping child abuse and neglect before it ever begins. CHECK CHILD ABUSE also refers to including ICTF on your Idaho State Income Tax. ICTF is funded solely by one federal grant and contributions from tax donations and private donors. Help us CHECK CHILD ABUSE by remembering ICTF as you file your 2004 Idaho Income Taxes. For more information call ICTF at 208-386-9317 or visit our website at: <http://idahochildrenstrustfund.state.id.us>.

